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# 2<sup>nd</sup> iCoachKids International Conference

Leeds 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Sept 2018

Developing Effective Environments for Children in Sport

BRIDGING THE GENDER PARTICIPATION GAP

Jason Tee and Stacey Emmonds

Leeds Beckett University

@JasonCTee

@S\_Emmonds



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#iCKConference

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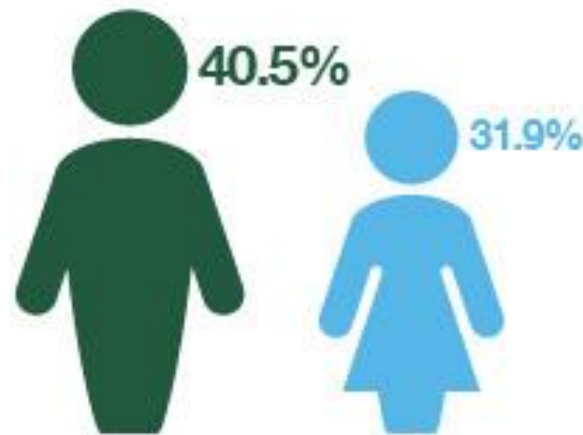


# What is the “Gender participation gap”?

## Who plays sport

Percentage of men and women taking part at least once a week

**Difference = 1.55 million participants**



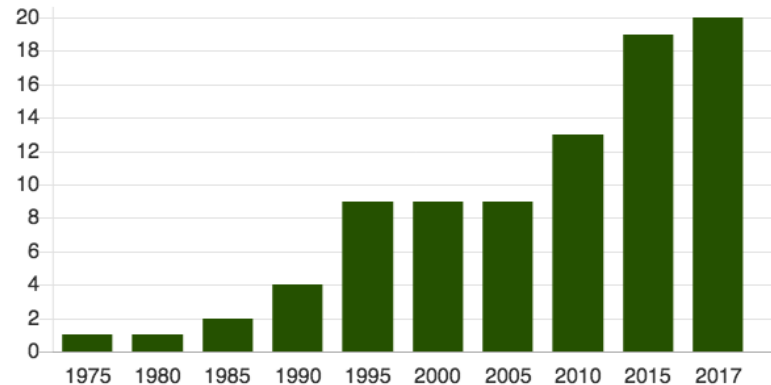
Source: Active People Survey 10 (Sport England, October 2015–September 2016)

# Positives

- England's womens rugby and cricket teams recently awarded first professional contracts
- FA Women's Super League players earn £20,000 a year
- 83% of sports now award equal prize money for men and women

Sports paying equal prize money

Number of sports by year



BBC



# Challenges

- Only 1 woman in the top 100 highest paid athletes in the world
- Fifa World cup winners prize money



£437, 000, 000



£15, 000, 000

# Challenges

## Media Coverage

- Women's Sport makes up 7% of all sports media coverage in the UK
- Just over 10% of televised sports coverage is dedicated to women's sport
- 2% of national newspaper sports coverage is dedicated to women's sport
- 5% of radio sports coverage is dedicated to women's sport
- 4% of online sports coverage is dedicated to women's sport

Women in Sport's 2014 report Women's Sport: Say Yes to Success



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# Challenges

## Coaches

- 30% of the UK coaching work force is female
- 17% of newly qualified coaches are women



Sports Coach UK. (2011) Sports Coaching in the UK III,

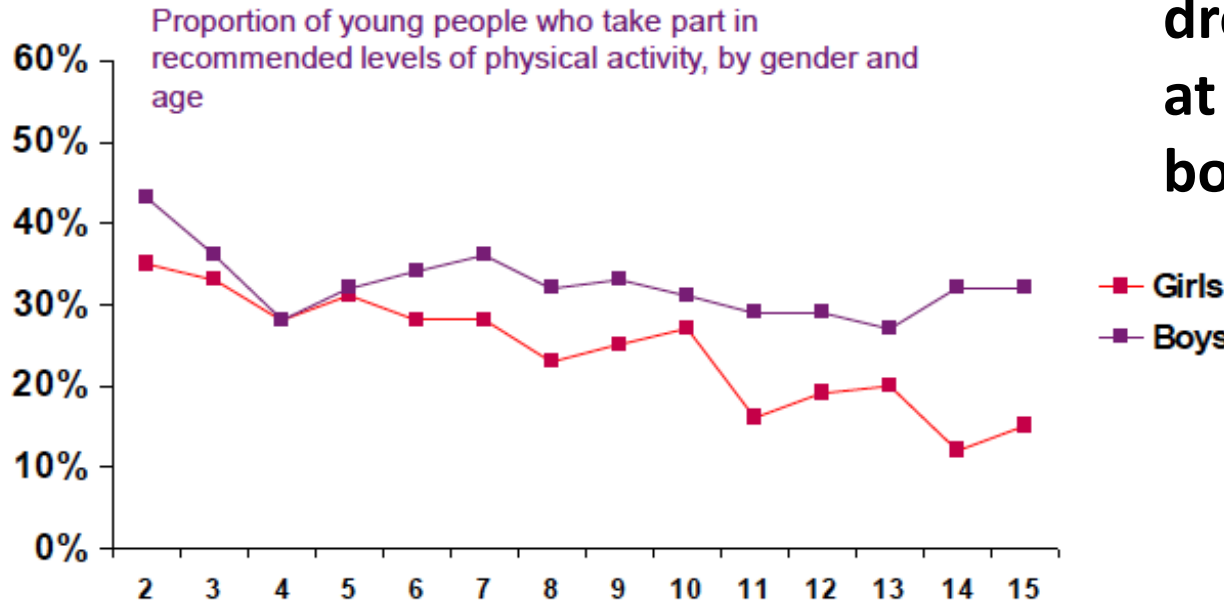
# How does the problem arise?





# Drop off in participation in teenage years

**By age 14, girls drop out of sports at twice the rate of boys**



Girls drop-out at different rates depending on where they live. Sabo, D. and Veliz, P. (2008). Go Out and Play: Youth Sports in America. East Meadow, NY: Women's Sports Foundation.

This suggests that we aren't satisfying the needs of female sports participants

How do we get our coaching "on target"?



# Who are we?



Jason Tee

Stacey Emmonds



# Who are you?

## Who do you coach?

Females

Males



# Who are you?

## Who do you coach?

Adults

Children/  
Adolescents





# Who are you?

## Who do you coach?

Competitive

Participation



# Who are you?

## Who do you coach?

Team Sport

Individual





# Introduce yourselves



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# Should we treat males and females differently?





# Would your coaching behaviours be the same in these two contexts?





# What about these two?



# What about these two?





# What's wrong with this picture?



“Positive coaching is  
defined by being  
responsive to the needs  
of the participant”

# Workshop goals

## What this session is

- Being reflective and responsive to who you are coaching
- Understanding the needs of women and girls in sport

## What this session isn't

- Problematizing female athletes
- Standardizing male sports experiences

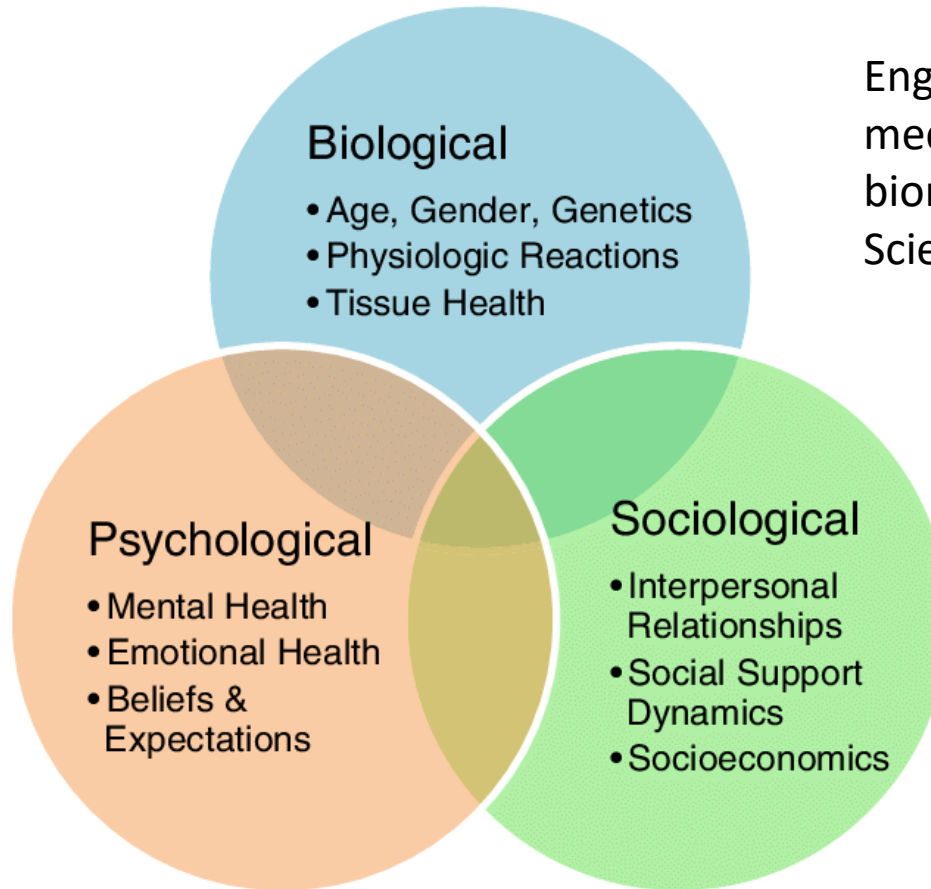


# Task 1 – 10 minutes

In small groups, discuss your experiences of coaching women and girls in sport

- What do you do, and how do you act/behave?
- How do you tailor your activities to the needs of these participants?
- Do you have any specific strategies?

# Understanding who we are coaching



Engel GL. The need for a new medical model: a challenge for biomedicine.

Science. 1977;196(4286):129–36




# DISCLAIMER

**We are about to generalize!  
Please keep in mind that everyone you coach is an individual  
and may not be exactly like the participants we describe here.  
We provide some important considerations regarding women  
and girls in sport, but this never negates the need to get to  
know and understand the individuals you are working with!**



# DISCLAIMER

# Maturation differences...

 @S\_Emmonds



- Smaller heart and lung size
- Lower blood volume and haemoglobin concentration.
- Hormonal differences: estrogen vs. testosterone
- Females have **higher percentage body fat** due to the increased release of estrogen (may not be advantageous for sport)
- Increased release of estrogen is associated with **widening of the hips** and the onset of the **menstrual cycle**

**= IMPACT ON PHYSICAL PERFORMANCE**



# ACL Injury Risk

## *Increased risk of ACL rupture in youth females...*

- Greater reliance on knee extensors relative to hip extensors which places greater loads on the knee joint and ACL (Quatman et al. 2006).
- Evident even in pre-pubertal girls but magnified in post-pubertal females (Myer et al., 2013)
- Male athletes demonstrate a neuromuscular spurt as evidenced by increased vertical jump height and increased ability to attenuate landing force. The absence of similar adaptations in female athletes may be related to the increased risk of anterior cruciate ligament injury. (Quatman et al. 2006).

## • *Implications for training strategies*



Quatman et al. (2006). Maturation leads to gender differences in landing force and vertical jump performance: a longitudinal study.

Myer et al. (2013). The influence of age on the effectiveness of neuromuscular training to reduce anterior cruciate ligament injury in female athletes: a meta-analysis.



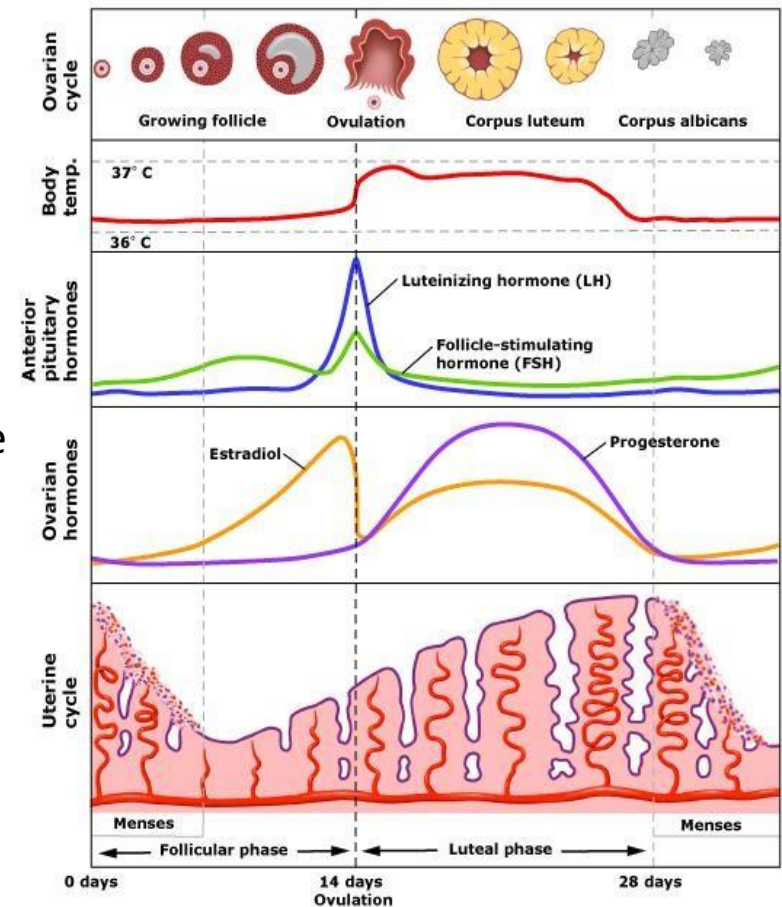
# Menstrual Cycle.....



@S\_Emmonds



- Phasic changes in reproductive hormonal concentrations during the menstrual cycle may influence performance
- Estrogen affects soft tissue strength, muscle function, and the central nervous system
- Levels of estrogen and progesterone may influence substrate utilisation
- Challenges of determining stage of the menstrual cycle
- The need for further athlete and coach education in this area



Wojtys, E.M., Huston, L.J., Lindenfeld, T.N., Hewett, T.E. and Greenfield, M.L.V., 1998. Association between the menstrual cycle and anterior cruciate ligament injuries in female athletes.

Bruinvels G, Burden RJ, McGregor AJ, *et al.* 2017 Sport, exercise and the menstrual cycle: where is the research?



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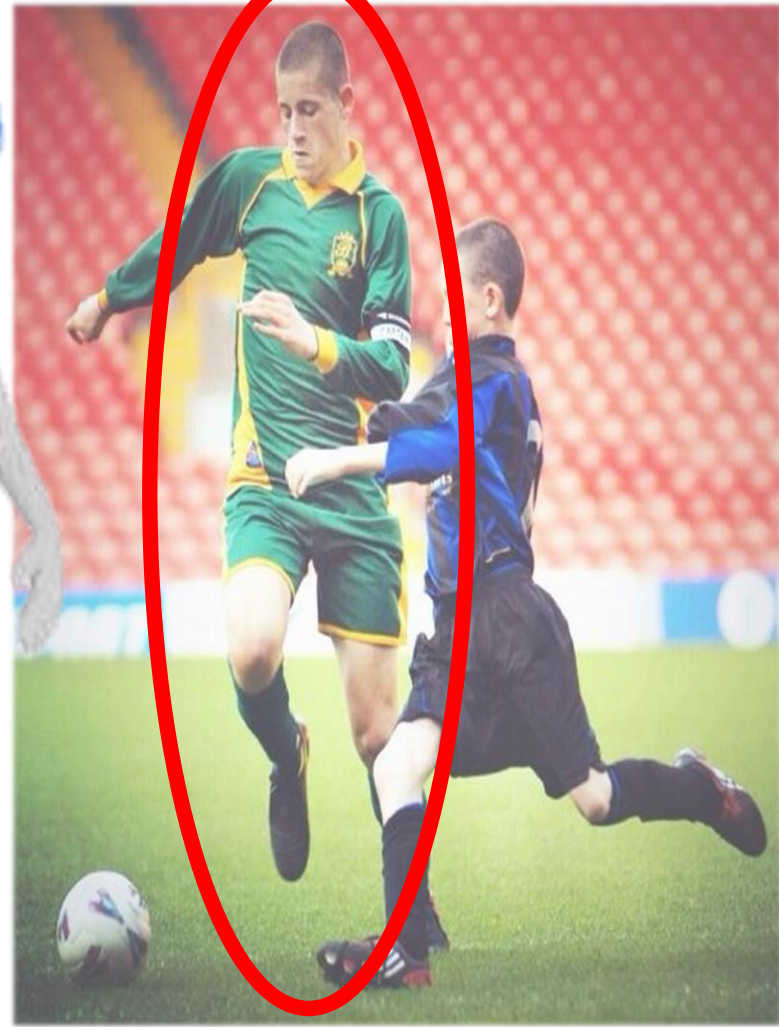
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# Talent ID and Development



# The Challenge.....

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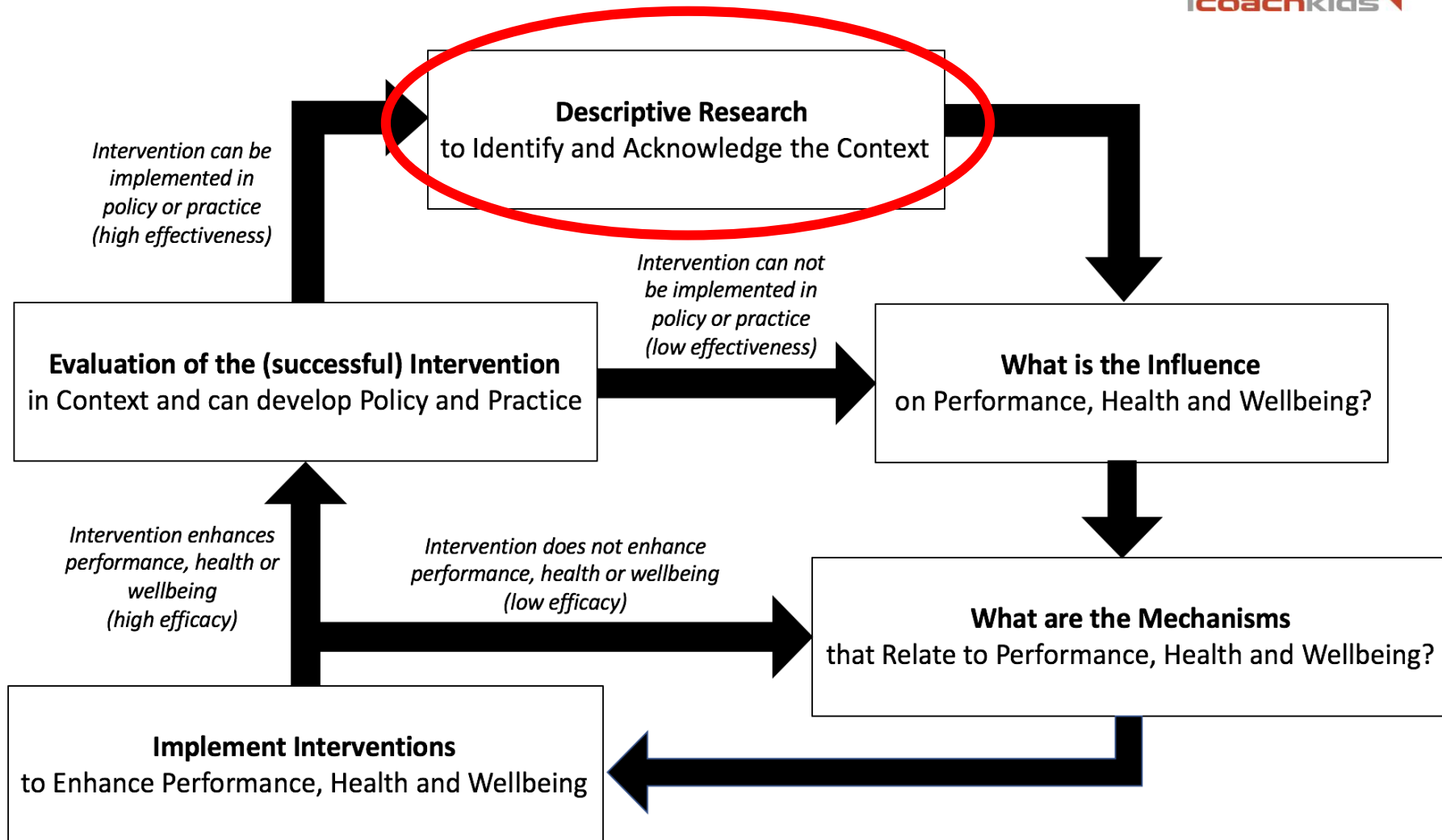
- Limited research in youth female athletes
- In the last 10-years a search of 'injury' AND 'rugby' AND '**female**' retrieved **196 articles** vs. **558 articles in males**.
- '**soccer match demands**': **13** and **107** articles retrieved for females and males
- Lack of research in elite youth female sporting environments
- Lack of longitudinal data





- *Application of findings in male athletes to females is problematic*
- *Challenges of leading an evidenced based approach*





# English female footballers 'need more athleticism' says FA's Baroness Campbell

By Tom Garry  
BBC Sport

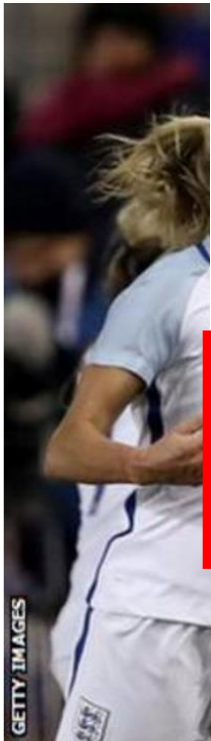
🕒 15 March 2017

"One of the big challenges in the women's game is just developing athleticism," Campbell told BBC Sport.

"It is not technical and tactical - [in those aspects] they are probably as good as anybody in the world.

"But that athleticism that you see in the American players or the Germans is a very different type of athleticism, power and agility. We have got a long way to go.

"We need to build it in much earlier. We can't suddenly do that. We need to be working with players much earlier on."



GETTY IMAGES







# Physical Characteristics of Youth Female Soccer Players

- 3 Tier 1 Regional Talent Centre's (RTC's)
- **157 Players**
- (U16; n =46, U14; n =43, U12; n=28, U10; n=30)
- Standardised testing battery
- Testing completed at 3 time points in the season





# Influence of age on the anthropometric and performance characteristics of high-level youth female soccer players

S Emmonds<sup>1</sup>, K Till<sup>1</sup>, J Redgrave<sup>1</sup>, E Murray<sup>1,2</sup>, L Turner<sup>3</sup>,  
C Robinson<sup>4</sup> and B Jones<sup>1</sup>

	Standardised Differences ( <i>d</i> )						
	U10 (n=30)	U12 (n=38)	U14 (n=43)	U16 (n=46)	U10-U12	U12-U14	U14-U16
Age (y)	9.25 ± 0.58	11.41 ± 0.98	13.22 ± 0.65	15.05 ± 0.64	<i>Most Likely</i> ↑	<i>Most Likely</i> ↑	<i>Very Likely</i> ↑
Height (cm)	134.7 ± 8.1	147.2 ± 8.5	159.2 ± 7.4	163.9 ± 6.2	<i>Most Likely</i> ↑	<i>Most Likely</i> ↑	<i>Very Likely</i> ↑
Body Mass (kg)	29.7 ± 5.1	37.6 ± 8.0	50.1 ± 7.6	56.8 ± 7.2	<i>Most Likely</i> ↑	<i>Most Likely</i> ↑	<i>Very Likely</i> ↑
Peak Force (N)	819 ± 135	1019 ± 193	1337 ± 234	1511 ± 196	<i>Most Likely</i> ↑	<i>Most Likely</i> ↑	<i>Most Likely</i> ↑
Relative Peak Force (N·s <sup>-1</sup> ·kg <sup>-1</sup> )	26.9 ± 4.2	26.1 ± 2.5	26.5 ± 4.2	26.7 ± 2.5	<i>Possibly Trivial</i>	<i>Possibly Trivial</i>	<i>Most Likely Trivial</i>
CMJ (cm)	23.5 ± 2.5	27.3 ± 4.3	29.1 ± 4.4	31.4 ± 6.4	<i>Very Likely</i> ↑	<i>Likely</i> ↑	<i>Very Likely</i> ↑
YYIRL1 (m)		635 ± 241	886 ± 334	959 ± 399		<i>Most Likely</i> ↑	<i>Possibly</i> ↑
505 CoD Dominant (s)	2.78 ± 0.15	2.71 ± 0.16	2.60 ± 0.10	2.54 ± 0.12	<i>Very Likely</i> ↓	<i>Likely</i> ↓	<i>Most Likely</i> ↓
505 CoD Non-Dominant (s)	2.82 ± 0.11	2.73 ± 0.15	2.66 ± 0.13	2.53 ± 0.09	<i>Very Likely</i> ↓	<i>Likely</i> ↓	<i>Very Likely</i> ↓
10m Speed (s)	2.24 ± 0.13	2.10 ± 0.16	2.06 ± 0.13	1.96 ± 0.14	<i>Most Likely</i> ↓	<i>Possibly</i> ↓	<i>Very Likely</i> ↓
30m Speed (s)	5.75 ± 0.31	5.19 ± 0.33	5.01 ± 0.28	4.81 ± 0.24	<i>Most Likely</i> ↓	<i>Possibly</i> ↓	<i>Very Likely</i> ↓

# Maturation and physical performance

Maturity Offset Groups (YPHV) comparisons					
	-2.5 vs. -1.5	-1.5 vs. -0.5	-0.5 vs. 0.5	0.5 vs. 1.5	1.5 vs. 2.5
Age (y)	<i>Most Likely</i> (-2.50 ± 0.62)	<i>Very Likely</i> (-2.39 ± 0.65)	<i>Most Likely</i> (-1.84 ± 0.64)	<i>Most Likely</i> (-1.79 ± 0.54)	<i>Most Likely</i> (-1.79 ± 0.50)
Height (cm)	<i>Most Likely</i> (-1.92 ± 0.56)	<i>Most Likely</i> (-1.96 ± 0.60)	<i>Most Likely</i> (-1.36 ± 0.59)	<i>Most Likely</i> (-1.04 ± 0.49)	<i>Very Likely</i> (-0.62 ± 0.44)
Sitting Height (cm)	<i>Most Likely</i> (-1.17 ± 0.50)	<i>Most Likely</i> (-1.35 ± 0.55)	<i>Most Likely</i> (-1.36 ± 0.59)	<i>Most Likely</i> (-1.29 ± 0.50)	<i>Very Likely</i> (-0.68 ± 0.44)
Leg Length (cm)	<i>Most Likely</i> (-1.71 ± 0.54)	<i>Very Likely</i> (-1.37 ± 0.55)	<i>Likely</i> (-0.77 ± 0.55)	<i>Possibly</i> (-0.37 ± 0.46)	<i>Possibly</i> (-0.34 ± 0.43)
Body Mass (kg)	<i>Most Likely</i> (-1.23 ± 0.50)	<i>Most Likely</i> (-1.61 ± 0.57)	<i>Most Likely</i> (-1.71 ± 0.62)	<i>Very Likely</i> (-1.17 ± 0.50)	<i>Likely</i> (-0.41 ± 0.43)
Peak Force (N)	<i>Most Likely</i> (-1.39 ± 0.51)	<i>Most Likely</i> (-1.47 ± 0.56)	<i>Likely</i> (-0.57 ± 0.55)	<i>Very Likely</i> (-0.88 ± 0.48)	<i>Very Likely</i> (-0.66 ± 0.44)
Relative Peak Force (N·Kg <sup>-1</sup> )	<i>Unclear</i> (-0.08 ± 0.46)	<i>Unclear</i> (-0.19 ± 0.50)	<i>Likely</i> (0.63 ± 0.55)	<i>Unclear</i> (-0.23 ± 0.46)	<i>Possibly</i> (-0.41 ± 0.43)
CMJ (cm)	<i>Likely</i> (-0.54 ± 0.47)	<i>Likely</i> (-0.65 ± 0.51)	<i>Unclear</i> (-0.26 ± 0.54)	<i>Possibly</i> (0.26 ± 0.46)	<i>Most Likely</i> (-1.17 ± 0.46)
10 m Sprint (s)	<i>Unclear</i> (0.07 ± 0.46)	<i>Most Likely</i> (1.43 ± 0.56)	<i>Likely</i> (-0.57 ± 0.54)	<i>Likely</i> (0.60 ± 0.47)	<i>Unclear</i> (0.07 ± 0.43)
30 m Sprint (s)	<i>Very Likely</i> (0.68 ± 0.47)	<i>Likely</i> (0.65 ± 0.51)	<i>Possibly</i> (0.30 ± 0.54)	<i>Unclear</i> (0.21 ± 0.46)	<i>Possibly</i> (0.34 ± 0.43)
505 CoD Dominant (s)	<i>Likely</i> (0.85 ± 0.48)	<i>Unclear</i> (0.23 ± 0.50)	<i>Unclear</i> (0.00 ± 0.53)	<i>Possibly</i> (0.45 ± 0.47)	<i>Likely</i> (0.53 ± 0.43)
505 CoD N-Dominant (s)	<i>Very Likely</i> (0.84 ± 0.48)	<i>Possibly</i> (0.31 ± 0.50)	<i>Unclear</i> (0.00 ± 0.53)	<i>Possibly Trivial</i> (0.42 ± 0.47)	<i>Very Likely</i> (0.87 ± 0.45)
YYIRL (m)		<i>Unclear</i> (-0.18 ± 0.50)	<i>Likely</i> (-0.55 ± 0.54)	<i>Unclear</i> (0.03 ± 0.46)	<i>Unclear</i> (-0.21 ± 0.43)

# Predictors of speed, change of direction ability and lower body power in youth female soccer players: Allometric scaling

Variables	Predictors	$\beta$	$R^2$	P
10m Speed (s)	30m.kg	1.226	0.870	<0.001
	505 Dom.kg	-0.210		
	CMJ.kg	-0.211		
	YPHV	0.139		
30m Sprint (s)	10m.kg	0.635	0.996	<0.001
	CMJ.kg	-0.234		
	YPHV	0.194		
	505 Dom.kg	-0.129		
CoD Dominant (s)	YPHV	0.559	0.449	<0.001
	PF.kg	-0.424		
CoD N-Dominant (s)	YPHV	-0.293	0.216	<0.001
	PF.kg	-0.226		
CMJ (cm)	YPHV	0.582	0.401	<0.001
	PF.kg	0.268		



# Seasonal Changes in Physical Characteristics of Elite Youth Female Soccer Players

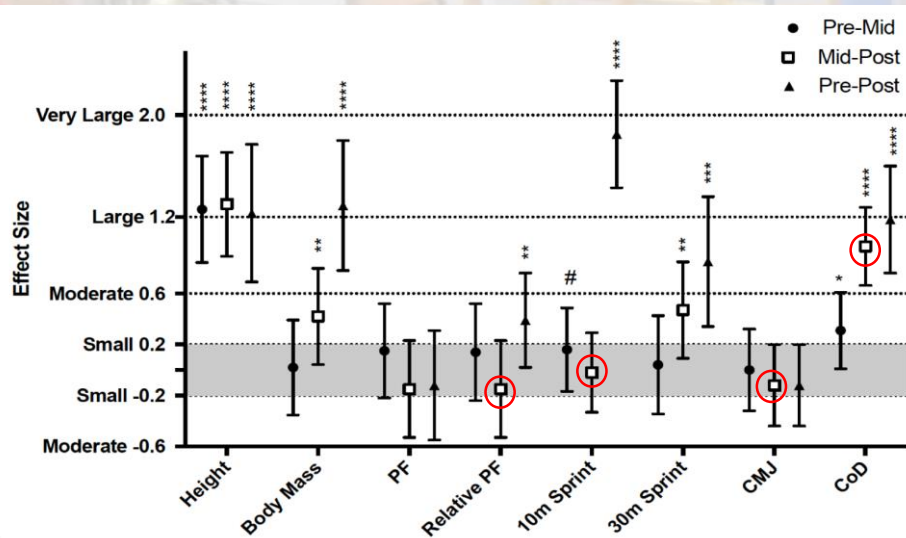


Figure 1: Seasonal changes in physical characteristics of U10 players

\* Possibly, \*\*Likely, \*\*\*Very Likely, # Possibly Trivial, ## Likely Trivial

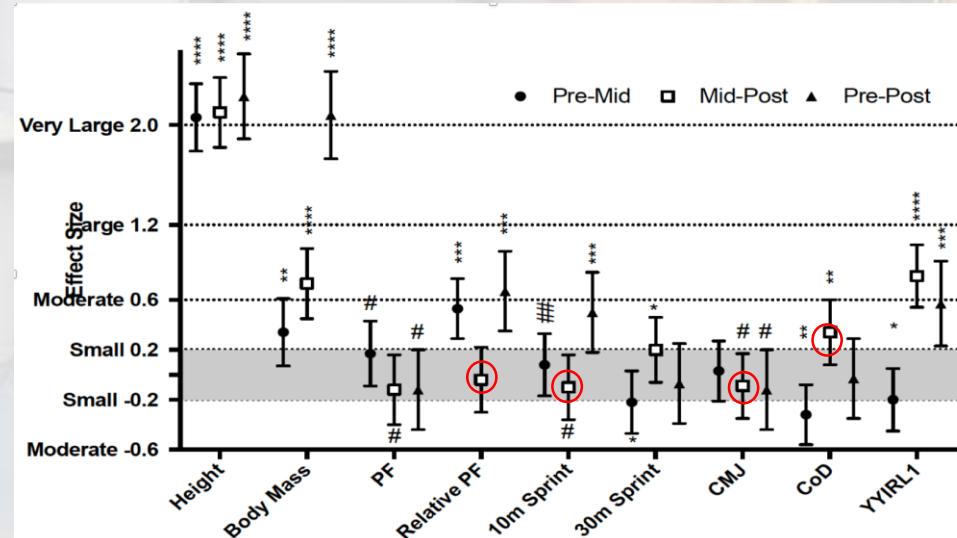


Figure 2: Seasonal changes in physical characteristics of U12 players

\* Possibly, \*\*Likely, \*\*\*Very Likely, # Possibly Trivial, ## Likely Trivial

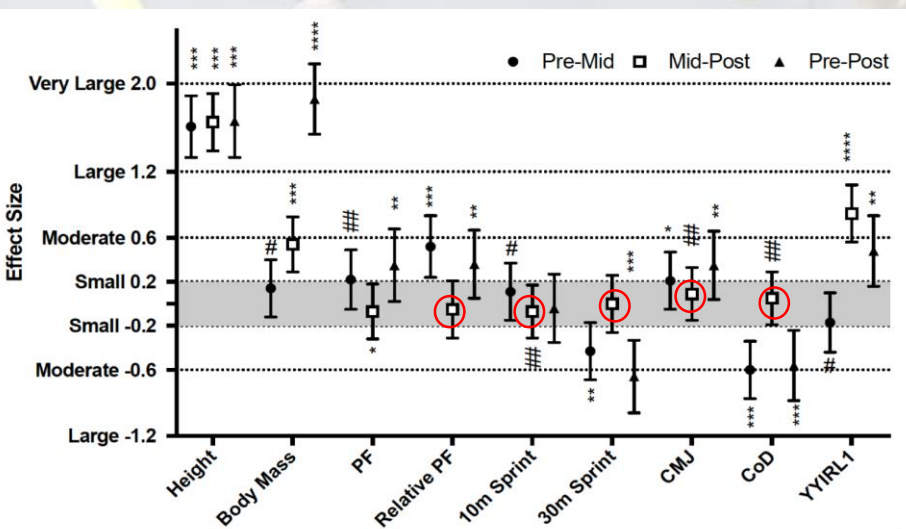


Figure 3: Seasonal changes in physical characteristics of U14 players

\* Possibly, \*\*Likely, \*\*\*Very Likely, # Possibly Trivial, ## Likely Trivial

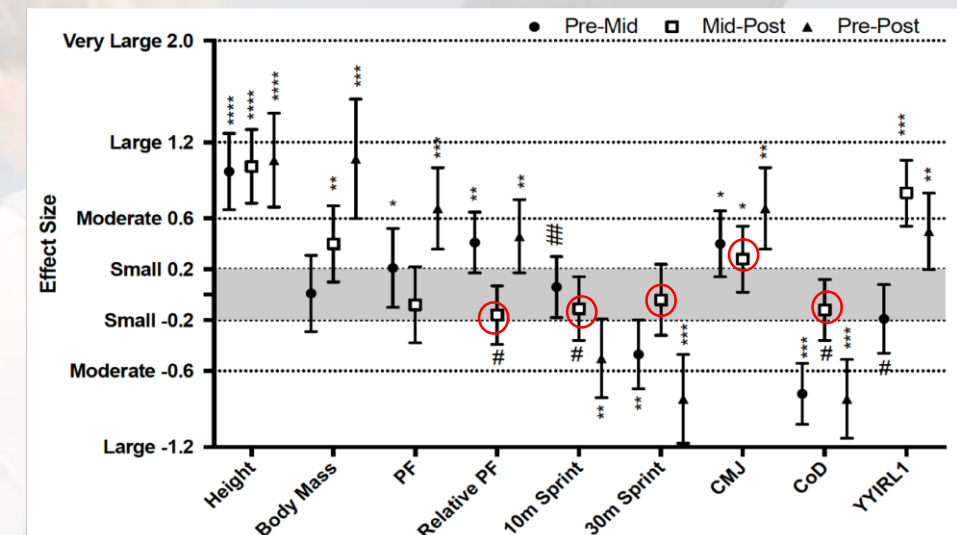


Figure 4: Seasonal changes in physical characteristics of U16 players

\* Possibly, \*\*Likely, \*\*\*Very Likely, # Possibly Trivial, ## Likely Trivial








# Summary.....

- Growth and maturation influences the physical characteristics of youth female players
- Relative strength does not increase with maturation
- Unclear changes were observed in aerobic capacity after PHV
- Relative strength and lower body power are predictors of speed and change of direction ability
- Current training strategies may not be optimal for the physical development of youth players across a season

## Task 2: 10 Minutes

An athlete is going through a period of accelerated physical development. How would you manage this female youth athlete?

-  Increase in height and body mass
-  Increase in fat mass
-  Onset of the menstrual cycle
-  Decrease in neuromuscular control
-  Decrease in relative strength

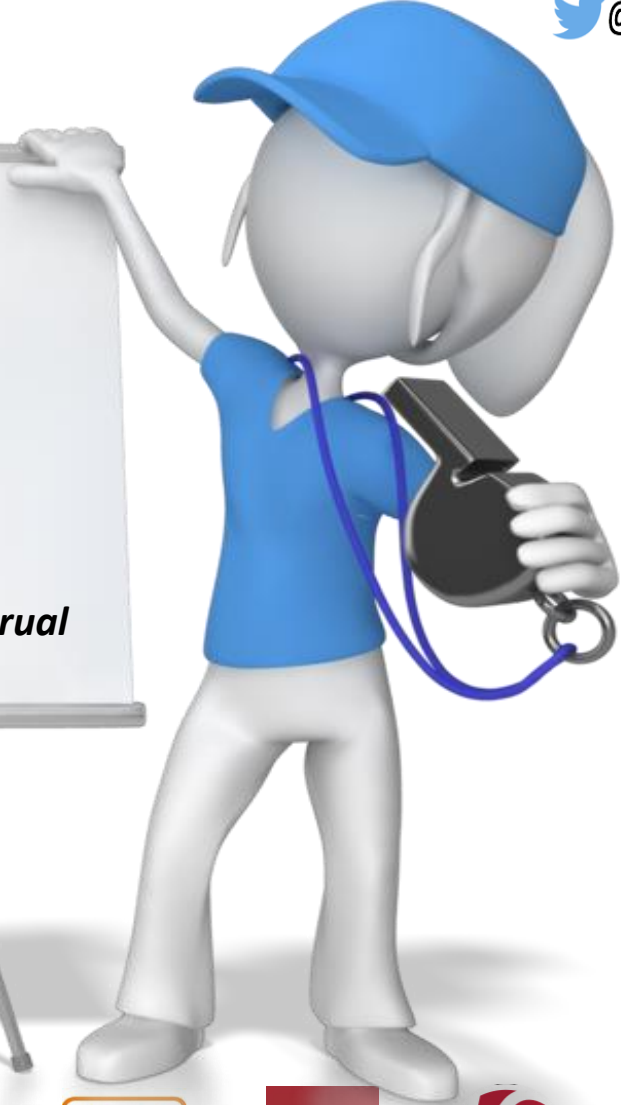


# Strategies to enhance physical performance in youth female athletes

- Awareness of general patterns of growth and maturation in girls allows coaches and practitioners to appropriately design training programmes to the athletes stage of development
- Morphological, hormonal and structural changes that occur during maturation may have implications for performance and injury risk in youth female athletes: implications for training
- With girls increasingly involved in more intense sports training environments, further applied research is needed to enhance our understanding of normal variations in growth and maturations and the ways in which they influence and are impacted youth female athletes physical development and performance



# Strategies to enhance physical performance in youth female athletes

- 
- *Consider the influence of maturation on physical performance*
  - *Develop fundamental movement skills*
  - *Inclusion of neuromuscular training drills within training sessions*
  - *Monitoring wellness (including the menstrual cycle) and training load*

 @S\_Emmonds





# Integrative Neuromuscular Training (INT): *What the evidence says.....*

- **1-2 15-20min sessions per week** may be enough to significantly reduce injury risk and **enhance physical performance**
- Inclusion of **dynamic functional activities** may be **more beneficial** than static balance activities
- Higher compliance rates signify a greater reduction in the incidence rates of ACL injury
- BUT....often compliance rate is low!  
**(Less than 50%!!!!)**



Sugimoto et al. (2012). Compliance with neuromuscular training and anterior cruciate ligament injury risk reduction in female athletes: a meta-analysis.





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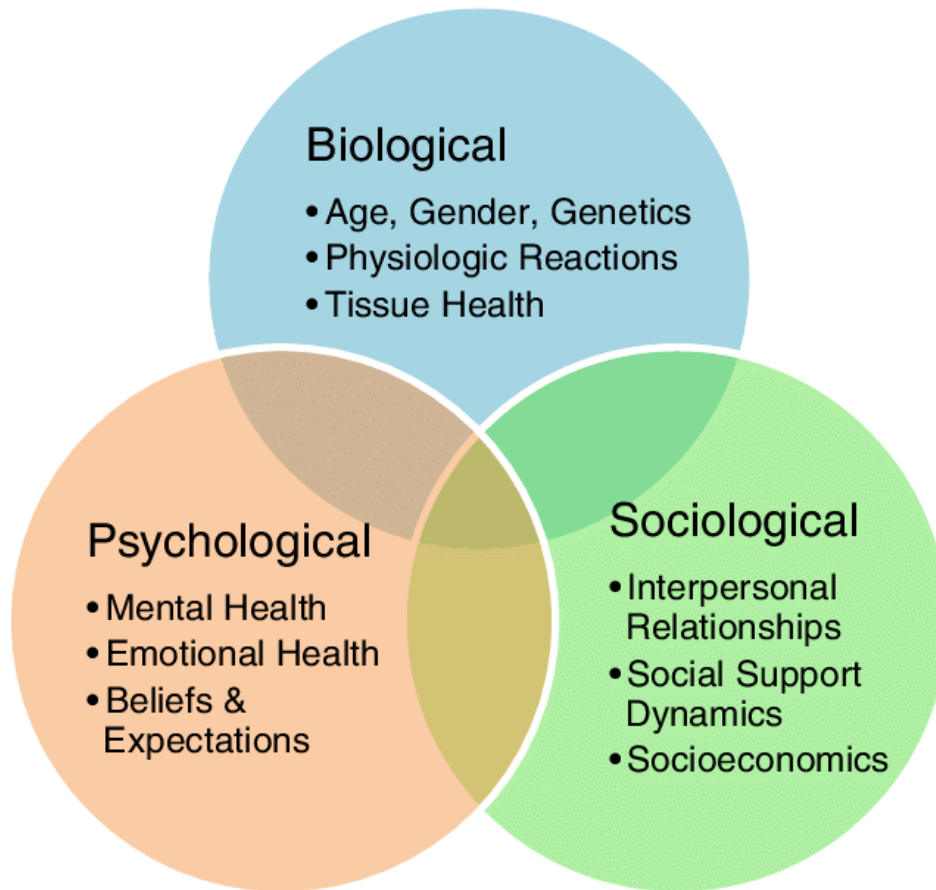


## RFL Girl's Talent Hubs: Physical Movement Programme

Exercise	Exercise Diagram		Description	Reps
Double Leg Glute Bridge			Lift your hips off the ground until your knees, hips and shoulders form a straight line making sure you do not over-extend, keeping the rib cage down. Keep feet flat on the floor and weight in the mid foot.	10
Single Leg Glute Bridge			Lift your hip off the ground until your knee, hip and shoulder form a straight line making sure you do not over-extend. Ensure hips stay square. Keep foot flat on the floor and weight in the mid foot.	8 EL
Glute Bridge March			Lift your hip off the ground until your knee, hip and shoulder form a straight line making sure you do not over-extend. Ensure hips stay square. Keep your alternate foot flat on the floor and weight in the mid foot. Alternate, lifting each foot of the ground in a marching sequence, maintaining alignment of your hips.	8 EL
Bird Dog			Start with your hands under your shoulders and knees under your hips, while keeping your head, neck, and back straight. Slowly extend one arm, while simultaneously extending the opposite leg. Maintain a neutral spine (flat back) throughout and head in a neutral position. Slowly return to the start position and repeat with the opposite arm and leg.	6 EL
Body Weight Squat			Feet shoulder width apart, knee in line with toe. Retract shoulders back, head in a neutral position. Weight through mid-foot. Keep your ribcage down and pelvis tucked posteriorly to neutral.	10
Lateral Lunge			Keep hips square, knee in line with toe and weight through the mid foot. Sit hip back.	8 EL
Split Squat			Take a big step forwards, keeping alignment between hip, knee and ankle. Weight in the midfoot of the front leg. Slowly flex the hip, knee and ankle. Maintain a neutral spine and head in a neutral position throughout. If your heel is coming off the ground, take a bigger step forwards.	8 EL
Reverse Lunge			Take a big step back with one leg, maintain hip, knee and toe alignment of the front leg. Ensure weight in through the mid foot of the front leg, rib cage is down and spine is neutral. Drive through the mid foot of the front leg to return to the start position.	8 EL



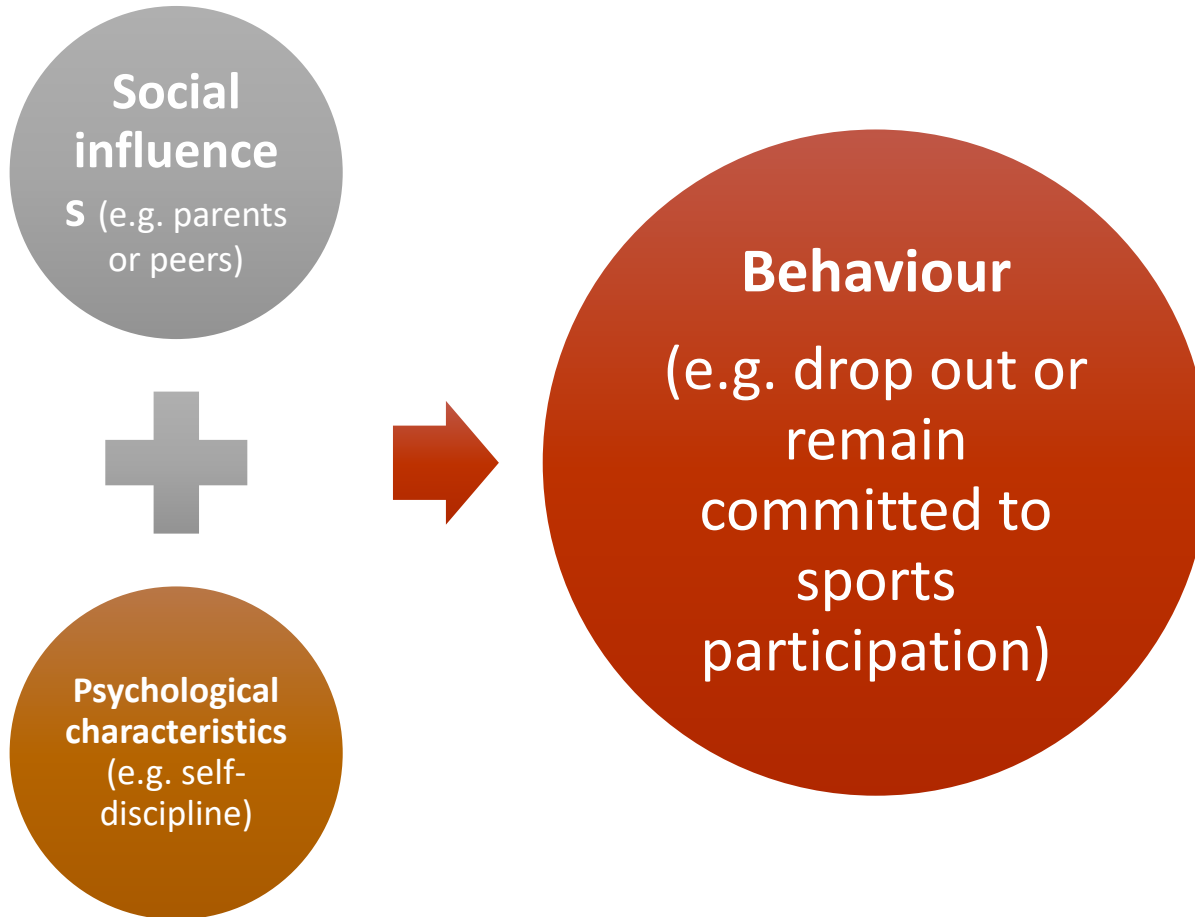
# Psychosocial needs of women and girls in sport



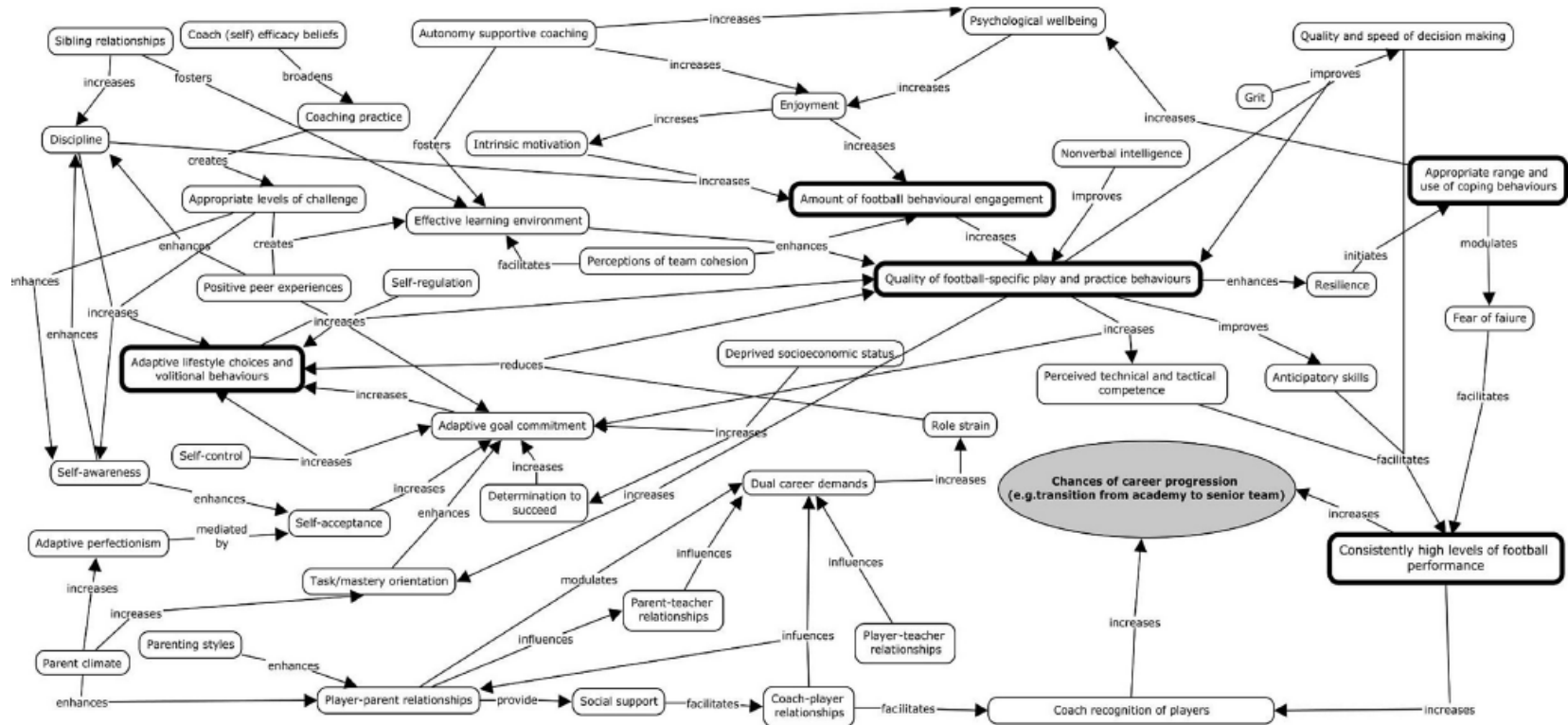
**psychosocial**  
/saɪkəʊ'səʊʃ(ə)l/

the interrelation of individual psychological characteristics with social influences and to the ways in which these may shape or guide behaviours

# Example



# The interaction between psychological and social factors is complex



**Fig 2.** Concept map of psychosocial factors associated with talent development in football and their hypothesized relationships.

Gledhill, A., Harwood, C. and Forsdyke, D., 2017. Psychosocial factors associated with talent development in football: A systematic review. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 31, pp.93-112.

# What are the biggest factors affecting adolescent girls participation in sport

## Family support

*"If you don't have a supportive family, then obviously, it's a lot harder – especially in stuff like getting there and to clubs and stuff."*

## Social support

*"If your friends are, like – go out and do things with you, then you're gonna be more active. And if they do encourage you to do anything, you're gonna be more active."*

Sport England Research January 2006

## Confidence

*"I just don't have confidence around boys. 'Cos I just don't feel comfortable at all and 'cos it all depends on popularity and if you're not as good as them, then they take the mick out of you and everything."*

## Access

*"I think clubs don't really motivate you any more. I don't feel there are a lot of clubs any more. I mean, especially for women. It's all right for lads – they can do football. But there's no - no clubs for women, I don't think."*



# Family support

*“My dad coached weekends when I was growing up and he took me with him ... It was quite nice being coached by my dad as I was growing up. Sometimes you’ll get coaches that don’t really know how to handle you, but because he was my dad as well, he knew how to handle me. He knew what I wanted from soccer; he knew how I learnt things best so all that really helped me learn as a player”*

Gledhill, A. and Harwood, C., 2014. Developmental experiences of elite female youth soccer players. *International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 12(2), pp.150-165.

# Social support

*“My friends realise how important my soccer is to me so ... they’re not always like lets go out Friday, Saturday night or whatever, they’re always like you go training get yourself sorted out and then we’ll arrange a time to go to the cinema or something. They respect that I have to balance my life quite a lot, so they make time for me rather than trying to get me to do the things that I shouldn’t really be doing..”*

Gledhill, A. and Harwood, C., 2014. Developmental experiences of elite female youth soccer players. *International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 12(2), pp.150-165.

# Social pressures

*“Nobody played soccer near me! Everyone thought that girls that played soccer were just lesbians which when I look back now doesn't matter; but at 13, 14, 15 it's hard if all your mates are saying that...and all my mates just wanted to get pissed. I think I had my first drink when I was about 13 because that's what all my mates did. When I got to like 15 or 16, everyone just wanted to get out into town so that we could seem like we were more grown up. By the time I was 18 I was just playing soccer for fun....”*

Gledhill, A. and Harwood, C., 2015. Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 21, pp.65-77.



# Role Strain

*“I was in a disciplinary meeting with my progress tutor part way through my first year in College. He said to me that I was in danger of being kicked out because I was too far behind on my coursework and my grades weren't up to scratch. That for me was like ‘time to make a decision’. He talked me through [asked] why I was missing so many deadlines and it was mainly because [of soccer training and matches]. When I explained this to him, he basically said that if I wanted to make anything of myself then football had to go. I spoke to my parents about it and they agreed that education was my priority so I quit football pretty much altogether.”*

Gledhill, A. and Harwood, C., 2015. Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 21, pp.65-77.



# Task 3 – 15 minutes

You have been provided with two real-life examples of female athletes who are about to drop out of sport due to social pressures

- Discuss among your groups how you would advise these players?
- What can you do in your own settings to avoid these types of conflict?

# Task 4 – 10 minutes

Area of Difference	Men	Women
Intellectual function	Analytical, focused, linear, logical perspective	'Whole-brained' perspective
Base reaction	Action	Feeling
Stress response	Fight or flight	Tend and befriend
Innate interest	Things	People
Survival strategy	Through self-interest, hierarchy, power and competition	Through relationships, empathy and connections
Mental preferences	Hard-wired to systemise	Hard-wired to empathise

Sports Coach UK provided this table in a resource to support coaches working with female athletes.

- Are these assumptions correct
- If so, how would you adjust your practice in line with these differences?

**Coaching Women**  
**Female Psychology and**  
**Considerations for Coaching Practice**



# What do female athletes want from their coaches?



- To be supported as a person as well as a performer
- Coaching to be a joint endeavour
- Regular and positive communication

Norman, L., 2015. International Sport Coaching Journal, 2(1), pp.15-28.



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# What makes an ideal coach?



Someone who:

- is highly qualified and continually learning
- is organised and in control
- respects and listens to the athlete
- provides regular feedback, both constructive and positive
- supports the individual as an athlete and as a person
- understands what makes their athletes tick and what motivates them
- can adapt the training to an athlete's needs
- makes training sessions hard, but fun and varied
- is committed to the athlete and the athlete's goals
- has high expectations of the athlete and challenges them
- can be a role model
- can be a mentor.